

Message Text

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63

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03

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FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8661

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIEDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 1093

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, GY

SUBJECT: OPPOSITION PARTIES BOYCOTT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

REF: GEORGETOWN 1089

1. OPPOSITION PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PPP) AND LIBERATOR PARTY (LP) HAVE BOTH ANNOUNCED BOYCOTT OF NEWLY ELECTED NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. IN STATEMENT RELEASED TO PRESS, PPP AND LP WERE JOINED BY PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT (PDM) IN CHARGING THAT RULING PEOPLE'S NATIONAL CONGRESS (PNC) HAS REDUCED NATIONAL ASSEMBLY INTO "FARCE" AND "RUBBER STAMP". OPPOSITION PARTIES CLAIM THAT JULY 16 ELECTION IN WHICH PNC WON 37 OF 53 SEATS WAS RIGGED AND DOES NOT REPRESENT WILL OF PEOPLE. HENCE, PPP REFUSES TO NAME PARLIAMENTARIANS TO FILL 14 SEATS WHICH IT WON. LP, WHILE NAMING ITS TWO PARLIAMENTARIANS (REFTTEL), STATED THEY WILL NOT BE SWORN IN AT OPENING CEREMONY SCHEDULED FOR JULY 26. OPPOSITION PARTIES DECLARED NEW PHASE IN STRUGGLE FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS, DEMOCRACY AND JUSTICE HAS BEGUN. ALL GUYANESE ASKED TO DEMAND END TO PARLIAMENT AND TO JOIN STRUGGLE FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS.

2. COMMENT: IF BOYCOTT IS INTENDED TO FORCE NEW ELECTION, IT SEEMS DOOMED TO FAIL. BOYCOTT UNLIKELY TO CREATE ENOUGH
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ADDITIONAL PRESSURE ON OR EMBARRASSMENT TO PNC, ALREADY

WIDELY BELIEVED TO HAVE RIGGED ELECTION, TO FORCE REPETITION OF ENTIRE ELECTORAL PROCESS. AS PNC HAS TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY IN ASSEMBLY, PRESENCE OR ABSENCE OF LP AND PPP (WHICH MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE RAMPHAL TOLD AMBASSADOR CAN TAKE SEATS AT LATER DATE) WILL MAKE LITTLE DIFFERENCE IN CONDUCT OF DAILY BUSINESS. THUS BOYCOTT MAY SERVE ONLY AS GESTURE TO DENY LEGITIMACY OF ASSEMBLY AND ALLOW OPPOSITION TO VENT SOME OF ITS FRUSTRATION.

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